



FAIRFAX COUNTY

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
Office of Building Code Services
12055 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5504

V I R G I N I A

September 19, 2000
00-05

TO: All Architects, Builders, Developers, Engineers, Surveyors and Contractors
Practicing in Fairfax County

SUBJECT: Amendments to the 1996 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code

The Virginia Board of Housing and Community Development adopted amendments to the 1996 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC) which became effective September 15, 2000. Section 103.2 of the amended 1996 VUSBC allows projects for which working drawings have been substantially completed prior to September 15, 2000, to be subject to the previous edition of the VUSBC provided that the permit application is submitted to the Office of Building Code Services (OBCS) by September 15, 2001.

Highlights of the amendments affecting construction in Fairfax County can be summarized as follows:

- **Asbestos/Lead:** Permits are required for removing or disturbing any asbestos or lead containing materials during demolition, alteration or addition to structures.
- **Gas and Oil Appliances:** Permits are again required for the replacement of gas and oil equipment and appliances in single and multi-family dwellings.
- **Replacement of Roof Coverings and Siding:** Permits are not required for the replacement of roof coverings or siding on Use Group R-4 structures (single family dwellings) in Fairfax County since the basic wind speed is less than or equal to 80 mph.
- **Radon:** New provisions were added which allow localities with areas of high radon potential, through official action, to enforce the radon provisions of 1995 CABO One and Two Family Dwelling Code, as listed in Appendix F.
- **Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS):** Special inspections, including pre-construction meetings, are required for all applications of barrier-type EIFS excluding those applied to concrete or masonry.
- **Electrical Service Equipment:** Specific requirements are now outlined as to when electrical service equipment may be energized in single family dwellings.
- **Fireresistance assembly markings:** All concealed, vertical fire-rated assemblies must be designated as such with one inch lettering above the ceiling level at specified intervals.
- **Accessibility:** Buildings less than three floors or 3000 square feet *per floor* are not required to have an accessible route from the level containing the accessible entrance to the floors above or below (i.e., elevators).

- **Separate Restroom Facilities in Mercantile Occupancies:** Separate restroom facilities for each sex are not required for mercantile spaces with 5,000 square feet or less.
- **Customer Restroom Facilities in Assembly and Mercantile Occupancies:** Occupancies of assembly and mercantile, which do not serve food and have an occupant load less than 150, are not required to provide customer restroom facilities.
- **Customer Restroom Facilities in Business Occupancies:** Separate customer facilities are no longer required in business uses.
- **Elevators:** Any building four stories or more with an elevator is required to have one elevator with a car that can accommodate a stretcher for emergency services.
- **Existing Structures:** Numerous provisions have been added which provide new requirements for existing structures with regard to replacement glass, smoke detectors, fire suppression systems, and accessible parking spaces.
- **Change of Occupancy:** When altering an existing space involves a change of occupancy, upgrading that space to comply with all of the accessibility provisions of the 1996 BOCA National Building Code and 1992 CABO/ANSI A117.1 will no longer be required. Rather, accessibility upgrades up to 20% of the cost of the alterations will be mandatory toward meeting the standard.

Those individuals utilizing masterfile plans (for single family as well as multi-family dwellings) may continue to have permits issued based on the previous edition of the 1996 VUSBC until September 15, 2001. After that date, all masterfile plans and permits must comply with the new edition.

When available, further information and training opportunities for the new edition of the 1996 VUSBC will be posted on the Announcements page of the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services website (www.co.fairfax.va.us/dpwes). If you have any questions, please contact Brian Foley, Chief Structural Engineer, of the Office of Building Code Services at 703-324-1645.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE ON ORIGINAL

Zofia A. Zager, Director
Office of Building Code Services

ZAZ/bff

cc: Central Files